

The Question Discus'd,

Whether ENGLAND can be
otherwise than miserable under
a POPISH King.

A SHORT

A D D R E S S

TO THAT

HONEST Part of the NATION,

CALL'D

The Lower Sort of PEOPLE.



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An ADDRESS to the lower Sort of People.

Friends and Countrymen,

IT has some Times happened, that designing Men have led you into Mischief; but I dare say, if you had always the Truth laid fairly before you, as in this Address, you would take the Right Side, for it is not hard to understand Truth, tho' it is easy to overlook it, when glossed by Tricks and fine Language. My Aim is the Good of my Country, and I would not compass so good an End by such bad Means.

POPERY and the PRETENDER are Words mightily laugh'd at of late; Popish Priests have succeeded too well, in bringing People over to their Religion; and this is the second Attempt within these two Years of the Pretender to invade *England*. 'Tis the Busines of our Enemies to lull you into Security, and blind you, but if ever there was a Time for opening your Eyes, it is **NOW**.

The Popish Powers would be glad to see the Throne of these Kingdoms fill'd by a *Papist*. The *French* King would certainly do all he could towards it, because King **GEORGE** is the greatest Hindrance to his Scheme of conquering all *Europe*. The *Roman Catholicks* among us (a numerous Body) would not be wanting on their Part, tho' they often declare the contrary; but it is impossible that a Man can be truly a *Roman Catholick*, without wishing well to the Pretender, any more than you can be *true Protestants*, without being hearty Friends to King **GEORGE**. To compass their Design, which is to ruin us, the *Romish* Emissaries and their Dupes every where insinuate, that it is a Matter indifferent to the People, who is their King, or what his Religion. But I hope to convince you, by plain Matters of Fact, it is not a Matter *indifferent* who is their King. I doubt not but every Man of you is honest enough to allow that you owe Allegiance to his Majesty, that the Pretender has no Right in *England*, and that the Laws and Constitutions

must

must be broke, before he can get Footing here: I hope farther to convince you, that your Happiness and your Liberties depend upon the Protestant Establishment, and that War, Famine, or Pestilence, are not more dangerous, than the Crown of this Realm, on a Popish Head.

The Question is, *Can England be happy, or can it be less than miserable, under a Roman Catholick Government?* The Answer is, No; we have tried it twice since the Reformation, viz. under Queen Mary, and King James II. and were brought by both to the Brink of Destruction.

Q. Mary was the eldest Daughter of K. Henry the Eighth, who was the first King of *England* that durst resist the Power of the Pope: To please her Father she pretended to be a Protestant, but in her Brother K. Edward's Reign, she made no Secret of being a Roman Catholick. She had little Difficulty in succeeding him on the Throne, her Friends having by fair Promises gain'd over many Protestants; but tho' she knew Jane Grey innocent as to the Intention of opposing her, she caused her to be beheaded some Time after, because she was a Protestant.

Mary herself declared to the People of *Suffolk*, who were the first that raised Forces for her, that she would make no Alteration in Religion; yet she had no sooner got Possession of the Throne, than she resolved to establish Popery. But *Gardiner*, the wicked Bishop of *Winchester*, advised her to do it by Degrees. She declared therefore in Council at first, that *she would not force* Protestants to change their Religion. The Roman Catholicks saw the Meaning at once; and begun to talk with great Insolence, and *Bourn*, a Chaplain of Bp. *Bonner*, reflected so far in the Pulpit on the late King, that the People pelted him with Stones.

The Queen determin'd to humble this Spirit, declares her Desire that all her Subjects would be of her Religion, forbids by a Proclamation all unlawful Assemblies, (meaning Protestants) and all Ministers to preach without a Licence from Bp. *Gardiner*, who was a hot Papist.

The honest Inhabitants of *Suffolk* were the first who suffer'd on this Proclamation. Their Deputies, sent to Court to put her

her Majesty in Mind of her Promise, was sentenc'd to stand in the Pillory. Such was the Beginning of a Popish Queen's Reign! a direct and open Breach of her Royal Word.

The Protestant Bishops were depos'd, and the married Clergy turn'd out of their Benefices, and some, who preach'd without a Licence from *Gardiner*, sent to Prison. As the Parliament had not yet met, Popery was still against the Law, but encourag'd by *Q. Mary*, whose Zeal for it broke thro' every Tie of Gratitude and Honesty. She sent Judge *Hales* to Prison, for charging Justices to keep up the Laws of *K. Edward*, tho' she knew he had refused to sign a Warrant for disinheriting her. She resolv'd upon the Ruin of *Cranmer*, Archbp. of *Canterbury*, tho' she knew he saved her Life. As she was now determin'd to ruin those of her Subjects, that would not turn to Popery, all Foreign Protestants were order'd to leave the Kingdom, and Directions were sent to the Sea-Ports to stop such as had not a Passport from the *French* Ambassador.

Having got by Force and Fraud an House of Commons mostly Papists, the first Thing done was, revoking the Divorce of the Queen's Mother, which was manag'd by Bishop *Gardiner*, tho' he had been the chief Promoter of it. The next Act of any Note, repeal'd all the Laws in Favour of Protestants, and the Queen, to strengthen her Hands, resolv'd to marry some powerful Popish Prince, and fix'd for that Purpose upon *Philip*, afterwards King of *Spain*, of which the House of Commons declaring their Dislike, were dissolv'd.

The Convocation in the mean Time establish'd *Transubstantiation*, which is a barefac'd Lye, and downright Nonsense.

A new Parliament being call'd, Bp. *Gardiner* took Care that none should sit in the House, but such as were of Opinion that Religion could not subsist without the Pope; and Cardinal *Pole* coming over from *Rome*, they promised to repeal all Acts that had been made against the Pope's Authority, and both Houses, on their Knees, receiv'd Absolution and a Blessing from him. But such was his Impudence, and their slavish Submission, that, at the same Time, he denounc'd the Judgments of God against the Possessors of any Church-Lands, which included great Part of the Nobility and Gentry.

The Queen now stuck at nothing for the Service of the Pope; she commission'd *Gardiner* to revive the Laws against Hereticks with the utmost Vigour. *Hooper*, Bp. of *Gloucester*, a Man highly esteem'd among Protestants, was burnt alive at *Gloucester*, Feb. 9, 1555; about the same Time a Clergyman, who had been the Means of saving *Bourn*, *Bonner*'s Chaplain, from being torn to Pieces by the People, was burnt at *London* because he would not be a Papist: Both had their Lives offer'd them at the Stake, if they would turn; but, like good Christians, they chose rather to die. Two other Divines underwent the same Fate soon after, with some shocking Circumstances of Cruelty: One of them was put into a Barrel of Pitch, and as he was singing the 31st Psalm in *English*, he had a Blow on the Face for not addressing God in *Latin*. *Gardiner* resigh'd his Office to Bishop *Bonner*, who was perhaps the only Man of his Time that was more barbarous than himself, and therefore pleased the Queen the more.

Many were now burnt for their Religion in all Parts of the Kingdom, Spies being kept in every Parish to inform against Protestants; and *Bonner*, tho' a Madman in Cruelty had his Hands so full, that he began to be a little remiss; but the King and Queen sent him a very severe Letter, in which they commanded him not to let his Zeal against the Hereticks abate. This added fresh Fuel to the Flame: Among the rest, two very worthy Bishops were burnt at *Oxford*, *Ridley*, and *Latimer*; the latter 80 Years of Age, and a Miracle of Goodness. Abp. *Cranmer* was the next considerable Man doom'd to die. The Charge against him was, that he was married, that he had writ Protestant Books, had left the Church of *Rome*, and had contradicted the Doctrine of *Transubstantiation*. He confess'd it all, and was order'd to appear before the Pope in eight Days. They kept him in Prison all the Time, and then condemn'd him for not appearing at *Rome*. While in Prison, he was prevail'd upon to sign a Recantation; but the cruel Queen would not spare his Life. When he came to the Stake, the good Man atoned for his Weakness, for he stretch'd out the Hand which sign'd the Recantation, and burn'd it first. — So many suffer'd at this Time, that I should tire your Patience with an Account

of them all. The Persecutors were not content with burning the Living; they dug up the Bones of dead Protestants, and burn'd them publickly.

The People burnt made Confession of the Protestant Religion. The Queen publish'd a Proclamation, that all who had Protestant Books, and did not deliver them to a Magistrate, should be executed on the Spot, like Rebels or Spies in Time of War, as if she meant not to convert but destroy Protestants. One recanting in the Flames, the Sheriff took him out, and he sign'd his Recantation; but as soon as the Queen heard of it, she sent Orders to burn him, and imprison the Sheriff. The Almighty thought her too wicked even for this wicked World; she had a lingering Illness; yet five Persons were burnt at Canterbury for Religion by her Orders but a Week before her Death, which was in 1558; having, in three Years, order'd to be executed on a Religious Account, about 800 Persons.

Her Heart was so fix'd upon Popery, that she return'd all the Church Lands, remaining in the Crown, tho' she wanted Money, and was pressing the Parliament for Supplies: But I tremble to tell you all that she did; some Writers with very good Grounds say, that she had Designs upon the Life of the Princess *Elizabeth*, who afterwards made so glorious a Figure upon the British Throne.

This is a true History of the Reign of Q. *Mary*; a Reign which every *Englishman* ought to be well acquainted with, at a Time when Popery is making Advances among us, and a Person, known to be a Papist both by Birth and Education, supported by a *Roman Catholick* Power, dares to form Pretensions to the Crown of Great Britain. His Friends and Agents will tell you, he is not of a Temper to exercise Cruelties; supposing it true, what is that to the Purpose? Bp. *Burnet*, who was no Friend to Q. *Mary*, acknowledges that she was a good-natur'd Woman; but then, she was of an ill-natur'd Religion. It was not her natural Temper that made all this Havock; it was an Opinion of its being her Duty; and *Woe to the Country, whose Prince makes it a Duty to murder the Subjects on account of their Religion!*

I should now come to the next Popish Reign, that of K. James II. but shall not expatiate on it, as he had not Time to go so far as Q. *Mary*, tho' he began in the same Manner, preferring Papists to command in the Army, sending seven Bishops at once to the Tower, and setting his own Will above the Laws, which he had solemnly sworn to preserve; but the Wisdom of our Forefathers put a Stop to his illegal and arbitrary Proceedings, and I hope their Posterity will not make another Trial of a Popish Prince.

Should the *Jacobites* tell you, the Pretender desires to come in upon a Protestant Footing, take Care how you believe 'em; Q. *Mary* said the same, else our Forefathers would not have arm'd her Hands for so much Mischief. Has he not been bred up under the Eye of the Pope? Is he not oblig'd to the Court of *Rome*, and other Courts that profess the Religion of *Rome*, for the Subsistence of himself and his Family? Do you imagine a Pope would be weak enough to protect that Family so long, unless he had the strongest Assurances of their Zeal in his Cause? But consider the surprising Growth of Popery for several Years past: There are Meetings in all Parts of the Town, where Children are educated in the principles of that Church, that the Priests are ready to visit the Sick, before the Ministers of the Parishes can hear of them; that popish Pamphlets, very artfully written, are constantly dispersed about the Nation by their Priests in Disguise, who are many Thousands in Number, and the more dangerous, as they do not wear the Gown, but the Sword; besides there are Abroad upwards of fifty Religious Houses for the Education of *English* Priests and Nuns, supported at the Charge of *English* Papists. One Mischief of this you will immediately see, that it carries vast Sums of Money out of the Nation without any Returns; but there is a greater Danger in it.

Should a Promise of Toleration be made in Religion, and the preservation of Liberty, Property, and all Securities, in their present State, the Popish Maxim is known, that *Faith is not to be kept with Heretics*. Should it be told you, that the *French* Government is now good, and great, and merciful, you may deny it all, for there is nothing done but by Force and arbitrary Measures.

To

To conclude; it is the Interest and Duty of every Englishman to contribute his part towards keeping out Popery and the Pretender. If you have not Zeal enough for your Religion, yet have some Regard for your Liberty and property; have some Compassion for your Wives and Children. The Pretender is only a Tool to the Crown of France. The French Nation has ever hated the English; of late they have hated us more than ever; and you may depend upon it, that could the Pretender succeed (which God forbid) his Reign would be short. England would become a province to France, Frenchmen would seize our Lands, plunder our Treasures, and, as Papists, they must root us out at last, or force us to renounce our Religion.

It is for this Reason, that our Sovereign, the Father of his people, has done his utmost to oppose the power of France. — France in Return, will ever oppose him and his Royal Family. It is our Duty to strengthen his Hands. Self-preservation makes it our Duty, if his Right, and our sworn Allegiance to him, did not. Popery, you see, is as dangerous to our excellent Constitution, as the strongest *Poison* to our natural Bodies. — Join, therefore, your Hearts and your Hands in driving back a popish pretender, and any other Invaders of our peace, our property, and our Religion. Let not the King have Occasion for *preis* *Acts*, or any such Means, to raise Men to defend his Cause and their own. It will be more to your Honour, my Countrymen, to hazard every Drop of your Blood now, than to be torn in pieces by popish Armies and priests, when hereafter you refuse to affront your God by denying your Faith. — This I can assure you, and I have it from the History of all Ages, that if we do not resolutely assist his Majesty in defending ourselves, and should have the misfortune to be subdu'd, there is great Reason to fear, that the Question will not be, who shall be the King, but who shall be the *People of England*.

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